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Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

EC adopts Community Animal Health Policy 2007-13 2007

Approved by:

Debra Henke

U.S. Mission to the EU

Prepared by:

Yvan Polet

Report Highlights:

On September 19, 2007 the European Commission (EC) adopted a Communication about the new Community Animal Health Policy 2007-2013. The resulting action plan will focus more on animal disease prevention, compared to the responsive attitudes of the past.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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On September 19, 2007 the European Commission (EC) adopted a Communication about the new Community Animal Health Policy 2007-2013. In a [press release](#)¹, Markos Kyprianou, Commissioner for Health, said "People are more aware of animal health issues today than ever before, and have a greater understanding of the direct effect that it can have on their lives. Animal health has implications for human health, food safety, economic prosperity and ethical values. Through the new Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP), the aim is to serve public health and to achieve the highest possible level of animal health and welfare in the EU. Our goal is to reduce the threats that certain diseases pose, and to ensure that any animal health measure taken over the next 6 years offers maximum benefit for EU citizens." The European Council and the European Parliament are expected to adopt their positions on the CAHP Communication by the end of 2007. Meanwhile, the EC is preparing a detailed Action Plan on how to meet each of the objectives of the new strategy for implementation in the EC's work program for 2008-09.

The new CAHP 2007-2013 provides the framework for animal health and welfare measures over the next six years. The aim is to put greater focus on precautionary measures, disease surveillance, controls and research, in order to reduce the incidence of animal disease and minimize the impact of outbreaks when they do occur. This new policy was developed after an [evaluation report of the CAHP](#)² from 1995-2004 concluded that past EU animal health policies too often responded to animal disease outbreaks and following consumer scares on an ad hoc basis, instead of taking a pro-active approach for animal disease prevention. Suboptimal overall animal health strategies had led to costly disease eradication campaigns. Consumer outcry about burning piles of animal carcasses during the 2002 FMD outbreak in the United Kingdom and high BSE monitoring bills have triggered the EC to review its animal health policies. The fact that animal disease outbreaks seemed to resurface in the same few Member States (MS) raised some doubts that these MS might have acted with less vigilance. At the same time, the other MS were left with the perception that these disease outbreaks used their EU budget contributions in an unjustified way (See GAIN [E47015](#)³). The CAHP covers more than just the control and eradication of animal diseases. It also deals with issues related to animal welfare, food safety, agriculture, the environment, sustainable development, trade and research.

The new strategy is designed to fit within the budget already foreseen for the EU's animal health policy. Under the financial perspectives for 2007-13, a maximum amount of funding for veterinary and phytosanitary measures has been set for each year, up to a maximum of €450 million in current prices by 2013 (see table).

Funding for Food Safety, Animal Health and Plant Health 2007-13 (in current prices, Mio €)							
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Eradication and Surveillance programmes	245	308	308	308	308	308	308
Veterinary Emergency Fund	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
Other veterinary measures	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Food and Feed Safety	35	35	45	55	65	75	84
Total	338	401	411	421	431	441	450

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/ip070919_en.pdf

² http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/main_report_part1_en.pdf

³ <http://www.fas.usda.gov/gainfiles/200702/146280287.pdf>

Objectives

The objectives of the new CAHP are:

- To ensure a high level of public health and food safety by reducing the risks that problems with animal health can pose to humans
- To promote animal health by preventing or reducing the incidence of animal diseases, and in doing so, protect farming and the rural economy.
- To improve economic growth, cohesion and competitiveness in animal-related sectors
- To support the EU Sustainable Development Strategy by promoting farming and animal welfare practices which prevent threats to animal health and minimize the environmental impact of raising animals

Four pillars are identified as drivers for the 6-year action plan:

Pillar 1: Choosing priorities for EU action

Over the past decade, the EU has expanded from a Union of 12 Member States to 27. There also has been much change in the field of animal health, veterinary techniques, international trade and research. Some diseases which used to be a great threat to human health may no longer pose such a risk, while other diseases appear to present a greater threat than before. Therefore, a Technology Platform on Animal Health – composed of industry and other non-governmental stakeholders, and supported by DG Research priorities is reassessing funding and resources, based on careful risk assessment and solid scientific advice. Ultimately, funds should be focused on diseases with high public relevance because of their potential impact on human health, society and/or the economy.

Pillar 2: Creating a modern legislative framework

The existing legislation on animal health covers many different policy areas: intracommunity trade, imports, animal disease control, animal nutrition and animal welfare. This series of linked and interrelated policy actions will be replaced by a single regulatory framework that is as aligned as possible with international standards and guidelines. An umbrella piece of legislation, along the lines of General Food Law Regulation, could be developed. This General Law would provide the basic, fundamental rules and principles for animal health, while more specific rules on various animal health issues could then be developed where needed. The aim is to have simpler and more relevant animal health rules which are flexible enough to be adapted to new situations as they arise.

Pillar 3: Preventing animal disease outbreaks

The motto of the new animal health strategy is that "prevention is better than cure".

Identifying problems before they emerge and readiness for managing crises before they occur should help to significantly reduce the direct and indirect costs of animal disease outbreaks. Already, action taken at EU level against certain animal diseases has shown the clear benefits of taking a pre-emptive approach to animal health threats. The stringent monitoring and biosecurity measures which were implemented in response to the threat of H5N1 avian influenza helped to minimize the impact of this disease in the EU. The CAHP 2007-13 will focus on reinforcing biosecurity measures in all areas in which animals are found (farms, markets, border posts, transport vehicles etc). Disease surveillance will be stepped up, and the EU traceability framework (identification, labeling, TRACES etc) will be strengthened. Additionally, the EC and MS will continue to develop emergency preparedness plans and systems.

Pillar 4: Promoting research and innovation

Science is the basis of the EU animal health policy, and it is on the basis of solid scientific advice that any future measures will be developed. Therefore, the new strategy foresees more investment in and support for research and innovation in animal-related sectors. Public-private partnerships will be created and strengthened, to ensure sufficient resources

and funding for important projects such as vaccine development. A network of Community and National Reference Laboratories will be developed in order to maximize the knowledge that exists at EU level. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) will also play a greater role in the new animal health policy, providing high-quality, independent scientific advice and risk assessment.

For more information, see the EC website at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/strategy/index_en.htm

Visit our website: our website <http://useu.usmission.gov/agri/> provides a broad range of useful information on EU import rules, food laws, agriculture and trade policy. It enables easy access to USEU reports, trade and other practical information.

E-mail: AgUSEUBrussels@usda.gov

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E47050	EC Regulation sets targets for salmonella prevalence in broiler flocks	07/24/2007
E47017	BSE update on the EU situation in 2006	03/06/2007
E47015	EU Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP) Strategy 2007-2013	03/02/2007
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